



Urban and Demographically Characteristic of the Vojvodina Province

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Abstract

The paper deals with basic stages of demographically development of urban settlements in Vojvodina's part of Danube Basin during the period 1869-1991. The Danube Basin is the most important transportation and geographical corridor in Vojvodina. To the northwest and southeast the Danube is Vojvodina's natural border, while it cuts Vojvodina's middle part, connecting the smaller regional units in the Vojvodina (the Backa, the Banat and the Srem). The area of the Danube Basin represents for a long time an attractive location for population concentration in the spatial and demographically sense the Danube Basin would included all the population on the territory of Vojvodina's communities that are by the Danube: 16 communities whit 165 settlements. During the observed period (1869-1991) number of urban settlements going between four (1948) and 25 (1971) in the same period number of urban population increasing in Danube Basin from 96,488 to 589,604 person. According to the 1869 census, 21.1% of the total population lived on the territory of Vojvodina's part of Danube Basin lived in a urban settlements (index of urbanization), and according to the census 1991 59.7%.

The area near the Danube is hart to define and to border. This is especial difficult for the needs of demographic researches, because the population is concentrated in the settlements which aren't on the same distances from the Danube. Since the data concerning population refer to settlements and municipalities one of the possible ways to bind Danube Basin would be administrative-territorial way. If Danube Basin would be bounded according to

municipal borders it would be much wider are. This area would consist of many areas quite distant from the Danube and which in any natural aspect don't have much in common with the Danube and Danube Basin. Anyway an area bounded in this way could be in demographic way considered as Danube Basin which then would consist of sixteen Vojvodina's municipalities. In Backa these municipalities would be: Sombor, Apatin, Odzaci, Bac, Backa Palanka, Backi Petrovac, Novi Sad and Titel; in Srem: Beocin, Sremski Karlovci, Indija and Stara Pazova and in Banat: Zrenjanin, Pancevo, Kovin and Bela Crkva. According to 1991 census on the stated sixteen municipalities there were 165 settlements of which 55 settlement's territory (25 in Backa, 19 in Srem and 11 in Banat) were on the banks of the Danube.

In the first half of 19 century and during 20 century there were 13 censuses: 5 under Austria-Hungary (1869, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910), 2 between world wars (1921, 1931) and 6 after II World war (1948, 1953, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991).

During the execution of the first modern census on these areas in 1869, which at that time were under Hungary, there was a regulation concerning towns that was first mentioned in 1862. This was the first try to classify urban settlements. The regulation defined tree types of urban settlements: free king's towns (In Vojvodina's Danube Basin there were Sombor and Novi Sad. Outside this territory, but within Vojvodina's administrative borders were also Subotica and Vršac), free towns (Zrenjanin and at that time Veliki Beckerek) and free bordering communities within the military borders (Sremski Karlovci, Petrovaradin, Bela Crkva and Pancevo in Danube Basin and Sremska Mitrovica outside it). The criterion for choosing urban settlements was of

administrative-legal type. This means that settlements were buying town privileges or so called "right to prosperity" (Pušić, 1987), according to 1969 census the stated 7 towns in Vojvodina's Danube Basin were inhabited by 96,480 inhabitants, while the urbanization level (the part of urban population of the total) was 21.1%. At the same time, in Vojvodina's Danube Basin lived 63.3% of all town population in the Vojvodina, was the highest percentage of inhabitants in the whole-observed period (1869-1991). According to the same census the biggest town of Vojvodina's Danube Basin that time was Sombor with 24,303 inhabitants, after which came Veliki Beckerek (19,666), Novi Sad (19,119), Pancevo (16,888), Bela Crkva (8,284), Sremski Karlovci (4,874) and Petrovaradin (3,348).

At the time of the execution of the next 1880 census in the Vojvodina's Danube Basin the some 7 towns had on urban settlement status. At that occasion in these towns 101,038 inhabitants were registered. Urbanization level then was 21.4%, this means there was a small increase in the total of urban populations of Vojvodina's Danube Basin. This increase was between 1869 and 1880 censuses only round 0.5 index points per year. However comparing the number of Vojvodina's urban population, during this period of time Danube Basin part of urban population significantly decreased for 8.1%, and by this time was 55.2%. The basic reason for this decrease is giving town status to Senta, by which the total number of urban population of Vojvodina has increased significantly. Still, slow urban development of Vojvodina's Danube Basin is characteristic for the whole period under Austria-Hungary which is caused by the locations of its suburbs in a relatively unstable bordering area.

In the following 1890 census there weren't any changes in the net of urban settlements of Vojvodina's Danube Basin, and it still consisted of the some 7 towns. According to the stated census there were 109,342 inhabitants in these 7 towns. Although the rate of urban population increase in Vojvodina's Danube Basin between 1880 and 1890 censuses was round 0.8 index points per year, in this period there was a bit slower urban population increase comparing to rural population. That is why the urbanization level dropped for 0.9% and at this time 20.5%. Comparing the total number of urban population in Vojvodina, Danube Basin's part of the urban population was still in a decrease (of 0.5) in the stated period of time and it was then 53.7%.

The first 20 century census was executed at it's begin in 1900. On this occasion too the net of urban settlements consisted of the some 7 towns. The total number of their population increased to 118,330. Even though the increase of urban population of this

part of Danube Basin had the some rate of 0.8 index points per year as in the decade between 1880 and 1890 censuses, this time it was a bit more dynamic than the increase of the rural population for this period (1890-1900), so that the urban part of the total population of Danube Basin increased for 0.3% and the urbanization level was 20.8%. However, in comparison to the oscillation of the total number of urban population in Vojvodina, the urban population of Danube Basin was still in a decrease, which this time was 6.7%, so it's part of total urban population in 1900 was 47.0%.

During the period under Austria-Hungary the last census was executed in 1910. During this occasion there were again the some 7 towns in Vojvodina's Danube Basin. The total number of urban population on this occasion was 129,477 inhabitants. In the decade between 1900 and 1910 in Danube Basin the number of urban population was again in move dynamic increase comparison to rural so that the part of urban population increased for 0.8%, whit which the urbanization level reached 21.6%. The increase rate of the urban population in the period from 1900 to 1910 was in average 0.9 in index points per year. The part of urban population from Vojvodina's Danube Basin in the total number of urban population in Vojvodina decreased in this occasion too, this time for 2.1%, and after decrease it was 44.9%. Again giving an other settlement a town status, which is 13 settlement on the town centres list of Vojvodina, causes this decrease. This last town was Kanjiza and it became a town in 1908. If there hadn't been for this change the increase of urban population in Danube Basin and Vojvodina would be very equal, there would even be an increase for 0.7% in comparison to the previous census.

The first census between wars was executed in 1921. The statistical service of new formed Kingdom of SHS took the Austria-Hungary's method of executing census, so in Vojvodina's Danube Basin this census sets apart the some 7, and in entire Vojvodina the some 13 urban settlements (Kicošev, 1997). At that time there were 138,065 inhabitants registered for these urban settlements in Danube Basin. The urbanization level in the period between 1910 and 1921 has increased for 1.1% and during this census was 22.7%. The average increase of urban population in the period from 1910 to 1921 was 0.7 index point, a bit lower intensity in comparison with other intervals between censuses. During this period the part of urban population of Danube Basin in the total urban population of Vojvodina has increased to 46.5%. At the same time this increase of 1.6% is the first case of this kind since 1869. Already in 1923 the criterion for differentiation of urban settlements is accepted according to their administrating functions.

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Whit this new classification self-governmental towns, regional district towns of I class (with the senate) and regional towns of II class (without the senate) were set apart. In the year 1925 the status of tree kings towns was annulled (Pušić, 1987).

The second consensus between wars was executed in 1931. In comparison to the previous one, the number of urban settlements in Vojvodina and in Danube Basin was decreased for one. This happened because Petrovaradin was administratively joined with Novi Sad as its part. With this Petrovaradin was generally removed from the list of settlements (Kicošev, 1996). During this census in Danube Basin the total urban population was 166,483 inhabitants. Significant increase in the total urban population was followed with its relative increase, since the part of urban population in the total population number has increase for 2.8%, so the urbanization level has increased to 25.5%. The dynamic note of urban population increases in Danube Basin between 1921 and 1931 was in average 1.2 index point per year. The part of urban population of Danube Basin in the total urban population of Vojvodina also increased, which, however, was significantly milder (0.5%). During the same year in the Kingdom of SHS the building law was established, the first enactment of legal regulation in the field of urbanization on these grounds, by which obtaining the status of town-cities and small town-markets was provided (Pušić, 1987).

The first census after the II World war was executed in 1948. The census registrated great demographic changes caused by calamity of population, the Germans moving out and colonization of Yugoslav population. Criterion for determining the types of settlements was administratively legal. Using this criterion the number of urban settlements in Vojvodina's Danube Basin was reduced to only 4: Novi Sad, Zrenjanin, Sombor and Pancevo (Bela Crkva and Sremski Karlovci lost this status). This is the reason why there was a decrease in the total urban population of Danube Basin registered for the first time, which at that time were 163,558. This, at the same time, is the only case of decrease of this parameter in the whole-observed period. The part of urban population in the total population number of Danube Basin also decreased (for 1.2%) and at this time was 24.3%. Between 1931 and 1948 censuses the number of urban population decreased in average 0.1 index points per year. In comparison to the total urban population in Vojvodina, the part of urban population of Vojvodina's Danube Basin decreased for 4.0%, by this it reached the level of only 43.0% which is the lowest number for the whole observed period. Many Germans moving from these territories, out of which most were situated in Danube Basin, as

well as the fact, that Kanjiza lost its town status can explain this.

For the 1953 census demographic-statistical criterion was used to define urban and rural settlements (so called M. Macura's criterion or combined criterion, where the number of inhabitants is crossed with the part of agricultural population). Whit its use in Vojvodina's Danube Basin 9 urban settlements were set apart. Apart from Novi Sad, Sombor, Zrenjanin and Pancevo, town status was rejoined by Petrovaradin, while Apatin, Backa Palanka, Beocin and Stara Pazova get it for the first time. Significant increase in v number of urban settlements has reflected also to great increase in the total urban population in Danube Basin, which at this time was 227,904 inhabitants. The part of urban in total population has increased for 7.8%, by which the urbanization level reached 32.1%. Between 1948 and 1953 censuses the urban population increase rate in Vojvodina's Danube Basin was in average 7.9 index points per year, the highest number for the whole-observed period (1869-1991). The part of Danube Basin's urban population in the total urban population of the Province increased in the period between 1948 and 1953 for 1.6% and it reached 44.6%.

For the 1961 census the same demographic-statistical or combined criterion for defining urban and rural settlements. On this occasion, using this census, the number of urban settlements in Danube Basin increased to 18, which means that it was doubled in comparison to 1953 census. From those new 9 urban settlements, 2 rejoined their status (Bela Crkva and Sremski Karlovci), and 7 joined it for the first time: Vojlovica, Indija, Kovin, Muzlja, Nova Pazova, Odzaci and Sremska Kamenica. This was the highest increase of the number of urban settlements in this part of Danube Basin for the whole-observed period (1869-1991). The total urban population of Danube Basin in 1961 was 366,894 inhabitants. Their part in the total population of Danube Basin increased for 13.3%, which is of at same time the highest increase of this parameter for the whole-observed period (1869-1991). Urbanization level reached 44.5%. Since between 1953 and 1961 urban population has increased in average for 7.6 index points per year, it is clear that the increase of its part is a consequence of more intensive demographic development of rural parts of this region than in the previous period (1948-1953). At the same time the part of Danube Basin's urban population in the total urban population of Vojvodina has increased for 7.0%, by which it again was more then half of the total (51.6%), for the first time after 1890. This fact shows a bit more dynamic urban-demographic development of Danube Basin in comparison to the

rest of Province, where only 3 settlements joined urban settlement status.

For the 1971 census M. Macura combined on demographic statistical interim for defining urban and rural settlements was used. What it in Vojvodina's Danube Basin the maximum 25 urban settlements were set apart. Apart from the previous 18.7 more settlements gained urban settlements status (mainly settlements next towns). These are: Beška, Veternik, Jabuka, Kacarevo, Prigrevica, Futog and Celarevo. The total number of urban population reached 506,549 inhabitants. The part of urban in the total population in Danube Basin between 1961 and 1971 had a great increase, this time for 11.2%, so that the urbanization level in 1971 was 56.6%. This was the first time in the whole-observed period that in Vojvodina's Danube Basin there were more urban than rural inhabitants. However, the urban population increases rate between 1961 and 1971 was much lower, and in average it was 3.8 index points per year. The part of urban population in Danube Basin in the total urban population of Vojvodina increased for 1.6% and it was 53.2%.

For the 1981 census the administrative-legal criterion was introduced, which means that urban settlements were joining their status based on legal enactment of those day's social-political communities. From 25 urban settlements 8 loose their status: Vojlovica (joined with Pancevo), Muzlja (joined with Zrenjanin), Nova Pazova, Beška, Veternik, Jabuka, Prigrevica and Celarevo, while of the same time 4 new settlements join this status: Bac, Backi Petrovac, Starcevo and Titel. In this way the number of urban population in Danube Basin increased to 571,162, while the part of urban population in the total increased for 1.9%, so that the urbanization level at this time was 58.5%. Between two censuses in 1971 and 1981 there was a sudden decrease in urban population increase rate in Danube Basin. For the stated period average increase of that part of population was 1.2 index points per year. The part of urban population of Danube Basin in total urban population of the Province in this period decreased for 1.3% and was 51.9%.

The last 1991 census didn't register any significant changes in comparison to 1981 census. Again administrative-legal criterion was used, with which the same 21 urban settlements were registered. The total urban population has grown to 589,604. The part of urban in total population of Vojvodina's Danube Basin increased for 1.2% and the urbanization level was 59.7%. Between 1981 and 1991 urban population didn't significantly grow, this increase was in average only 0.3 index points per year. The part of urban population of Danube Basin in the total urban population of Vojvodina has

increased for 0.7%, so at that time it was 52.6%. At the end of the observed period (1991) the biggest urban settlement in Vojvodina's Danube Basin was Novi Sad with 179,626 inhabitants, followed by Zrenjanin (81,316), Pancevo (72,793), Sombor (48,993), etc. Soon after 1991 census in the Republic of Serbia the status of a town was introduced for the biggest settlements, which was one way of economical and political Autonomy (independence). Apart from Belgrade, Niš, Kragujevac and Priština, Novi Sad joined this status, the biggest settlement in Vojvodina's Danube Basin and the whole Province.

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